Rauði krossinn

The Icelandic Red Cross's Role in Disaster Preparedness and Volunteer engagement

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Disaster Services Officer

Rauði krossinn

Natural Disasters in Iceland

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The Red Cross is a civil protection auxiliary force

The Red Cross has extensive experience as an emergency responder.

Disaster services is the only compulsory assignment of every branch of the Icelandic Red Cross

IRC & disaster preparedness:

- Mass help shelters
- Psycho-social Support
- Emergency Back-up line (24/7)
- Helpline 1717
- First Aid
- Early Recovery
- Long-term Aid

Mass help shelters

- 500 volunteers everywhere in Iceland
- Ability to open and operate a with short notice
- Usually situated in schools or social centres
- Local volunteers
- Victims are provided with the most basic needs; food, clothing and shelter
- Can be a challenge to keep volunteers engaged as mass help shelters are only opened a few times a year

Crisis Unit in Psychosocial Support

- Volunteer groups operate in every area of Iceland - 170 volunteers
- Specially trained in psycho-social support – can be for example teachers or social workers
- Are always called upon if the case involves a serious incident for example: avalanches, volcanic eruptions, landslides, transportation accidents on land and sea, serious workplace accidents or sudden deaths at work

Examples of what IRC volunteers have participated in:

- Quarantine hotels run by volunteers for the first few months
- Psycho-social support in the aftermath of the Grindavík evacuation
- Operation of shelters (short term)
- Contact Tracing During Covid 19
- Volunteers can be moved in between areas, especially when the incident greatly effects the local community

Why do we need volunteers?

- Volunteers are essential to be able to respond to large and small crises
- Their assistance is inmeasurable as they fill crucial roles: shelter assistance, psychosocial support and information support.
- In our experience, people want to be useful

Takk fyrir mig